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S E R M O N.



A
SERMON
ON
PUBLIC WORSHIP AND INSTRUCTION,
PREACHED
ON SUNDAY 4th SEPTEMBER 1791,
AT THE OPENING OF
St Peter's Chapel, Edinburgh:
WITH
AN OCCASIONAL PRAYER:
PUBLISHED
AT THE REQUEST OF THE CONGREGATION,
TO WHOM
IT IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY THEIR AFFECTIONATE PASTOR,
CHARLES WEBSTER.

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Edinburgh:
PRINTED BY THOMAS RUDDIMAN,
FOR W. GORDON, P. HILL, AND R. CHEYNE;
AND J. F. AND C. RIVINGTON, LONDON.

1791.



A PRAYER,

Read at the Altar, before the Morning Service.

O THOU incomprehensible Source and Ruler of all things visible and invisible, Judge of all men, Giver of all good ! We adore thee the supreme Object of all worship, before whom, dwelling in the secret place of thy thunders, and in the midst of thy glory, the Cherubim and Seraphim veil their faces, and the hosts of heaven tremble ; who, though thou art not confined by time or place, though the universe is thy temple, tho' the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, much less those houses that are built
for

for thy worship and service, yet deignest to dwell with men upon the earth, to be worshipped by thy creatures, to declare thyself the hearer of prayer, and to promise, that when two or three are gathered together in thy name, thou wilt be in the midst of them, to bless them ! At all times and in all places, it is meet, right, and our bounden duty, to avail ourselves of this our privilege, thy gracious permission, to bless and magnify thy glorious name, for the numberless expressions of thy unmerited goodness, for our creation, our preservation, our redemption through Christ, for the returns of this day, and the opportunities of this place ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. Conscious, however, of our awful distance from thee, of our general unworthiness, of our unsuitable returns, we do not presume to come thus before thee,

PRAYER.

thee, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies, in pitying our infirmities, accepting our repentance, forgiving our sins, and receiving, with indulgent condescension, whatever we piously mean for thy service. Here, therefore, O gracious God! as on holy ground, suppliant at thy throne, we implore, with sincerest fervency, that thou, who heretofore vouchsafedst to accept for a temple even a stone or a tree, wouldst favourably regard this work of ours, this place of worship. May we ever conjoin with it, the thought and love of thee, and of one another. May thy merciful ears be ever open to our united vows, prayers and supplications for ourselves, our families and our friends, for all that is dear to us, our Church, our King, our Country, and the world in general. May our minds be here

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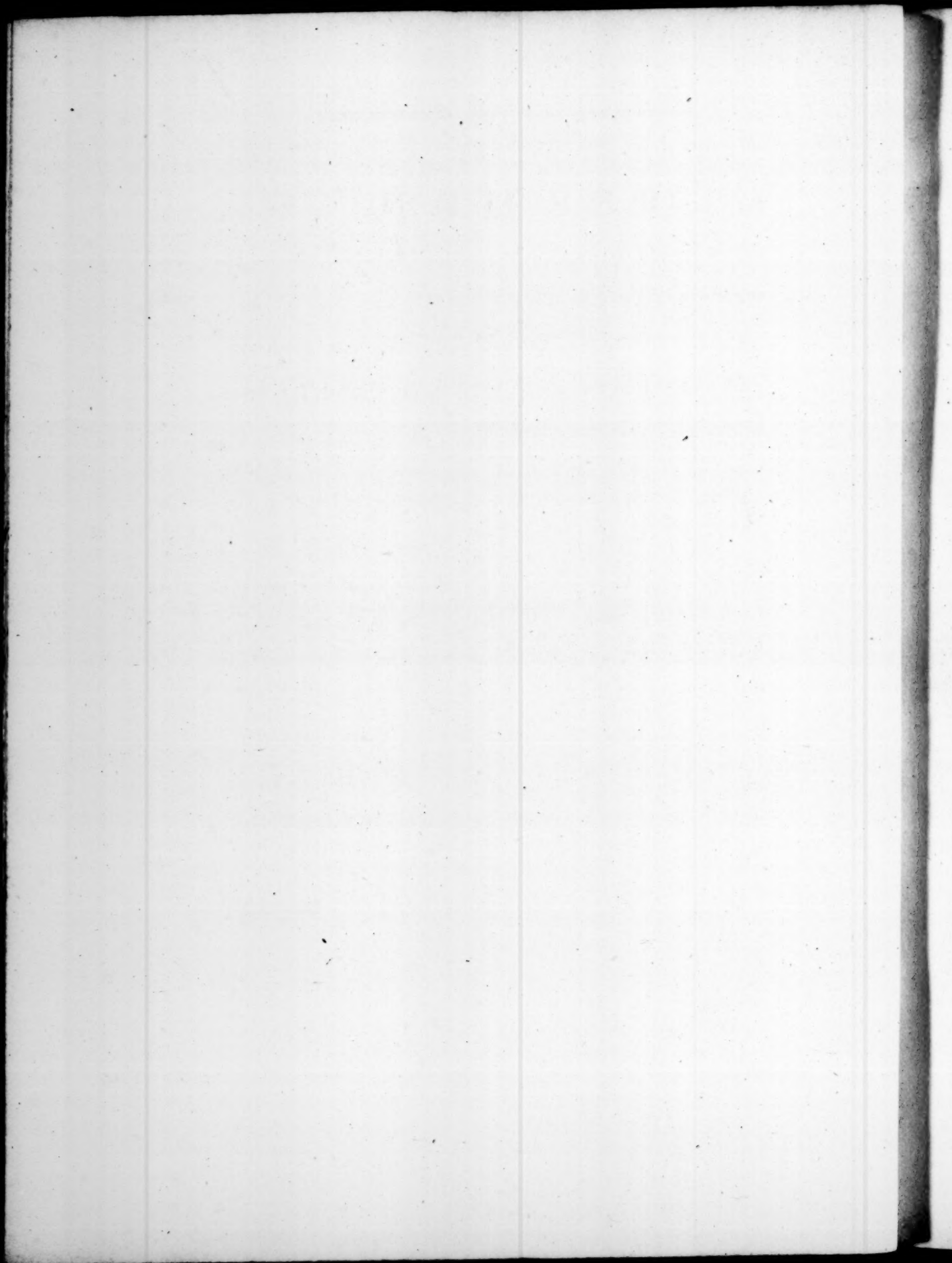
enlightened

enlightened with truth, our hearts inspired with virtue, and our feet guided in the ways of peace. May it be our house of thanksgiving in prosperity, our sanctuary of hope in the time of trouble, our refuge in the various visitations of distress. May it tend to estrange us from the pomps and vanities of this vain world, and impress us with a deep sense of the manifold frailties of our nature, inclining us to pity, to forgive, to do good; and may it ever remind us of the uncertainty of time, of the hour of death, and of the day of judgment. More especially when, here at thy holy altar, we approach the sacred symbols of redeeming love, when we draw near with faith to take the holy sacrament to our comfort, may God draw near unto us, graciously vouchsafing us all those benefits and blessings with which he has promised to bless it.

And

And as this house is now none other but the house of God, may it be to all of us the gate of heaven ; where, with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we will laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts ! heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high !

Then followed the Anthem, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good will towards men, &c.



S E R M O N.

LEVITICUS, XXVI. 2.

*Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary ; I am
the Lord.*

THESE words, expressing a divine command for reverencing times and places of religious worship, seem suitable to the first occasion of our assembling in this place now sacred to religion. The mind accords with times and places, and assumes a tone from their appearance and object. The Sabbath and the Sanctuary are necessarily connected ; they are both dedicated to devotion ; and having God for their object, they naturally become objects of reverence to us, reminding us to worship, and bow down and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Devotion

Devotion, whether the vehicle of our private or common homage and requests, is a dictate of nature, the command of God, our own interest, and the glory of human characters. Mankind, however, are so immersed in the business or in the enjoyments of life, external things are so perpetually striking their senses, playing before their fancies, and making impressions on their hearts, that devotion, like other duties, is neglected by many ; and were it not for the Sabbath and the Sanctuary occasionally recalling our minds from the numberless avocations of a vain world, to one of eternal duration, we should be in danger, amidst the perishing vanities which continually surround us, of losing sight of our origin, our destination, our end here, and our hopes hereafter.

The principles of piety are implanted in our nature. Struck with the wonders of the creation, we admire with reverence the source of all being : Weak and dependent, we lean to the Upholder of the world, and Disposer of its events :

Conscious

Conscious of our unworthiness, and feeling ourselves accountable, we fear the Judge of all the earth: Sensible of our manifold mercies, we love, with thankfulness, and with hope, the Giver of all good.

These feelings of reverence and reliance, of fear and love, mutually mingling, and modifying one another, are the principles of all piety, and naturally express themselves in words or acts of worship. A neglect of these, or a disregard to their expression, implies a deplorable defect either of sensibility or seriousness. With a few seeming exceptions of singular men, the wise and good have, in all ages, approved of religious worship; and even the thoughtless and profane, in moments of signal danger, or signal deliverance, are irresistibly led to deprecate or adore invisible power, and thus involuntarily to declare that piety is natural to man. There lives not a good man who would be deprived of this inestimable privilege, or even a wicked man who could bear to be told, that he never should address his offended God.

What

What can be so natural or necessary, what can make us so good, or so happy, as to adore that Being to whom we owe all we are, all we have, and all we hope for ; to pour out our sorrows and our sins before him, and to offer up for ourselves and others, our desires of forgiveness and favour ? Though our homage can add nothing to the happiness of the Deity, yet his goodness has put on it a value, which it becomes not us presumptuously to scan ; and the same law which commands us to believe with the heart, obliges us to make confession with the mouth. The sentiment is thus rivetted and improved by the expression, as our gratitude by thanksgiving, our benevolence by intercession, and our humility by prayer. Thus piety is not only itself a virtuous sentiment, but the best means, motive, and principle of virtue : It connects and includes all other virtues ; it sanctifies, it survives them : It is the best bond of society and friendship : It brightens our brightest moments, and gilds our darkest days : It is that fire from above, which, while it consumes the impurities of our nature, can
alone

alone consecrate and kindle any sacrifices which we make, and render them acceptable to heaven : It is the security of youth, the dignity of age, the balm of life, the support of death, and that deathless wing, on which alone the soul, rising above this little orb, can soar through the blissful regions of eternity.

No sentiment therefore is more natural or necessary to man, and in nothing is he more distinguished from the lower creatures. When he first awoke to the joys of consciousness and of life, and with wondering eyes beheld the glories of the universe, the earth, the heavens, the beauty, the varied happiness of nature, his mind, trembling with mingled emotion, must instantly have turned to its God. The first heave of his heart, the first opening of his lips, the first exertion of his voice, must have been in his Maker's praise. His chief happiness would be in feeling his glorious privilege of contemplating the divine perfections, venerating that infinite Being who gave birth to the world, admiring his power and wisdom, adoring

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his goodness, and aspiring towards him in holy affections of perfect love. Such, with the earth for his temple, and the vault of Heaven for its roof, would be the hymns, the prayers, the sacrifices of his heart.

Alone, however, he would feel his own worship too solitary and too slender a tribute to the immensity of God. For want of beings like himself, he would endeavour to inspire the earth, the heavens, and every thing around him with feelings like his own ; he would call on them to bear their parts in the general devotion, and to fill up the universal chorus of praise.

Accordingly, when God had finished the great temple of nature, furnished it with every means of happiness, and filled it with every beauty that could raise the soul to Heaven, he appointed the Sabbath, a memorial of his power, of our dependence, and of the propriety of public worship ; that man, created in his image, might, as the priest of nature,
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more particularly on that day, offer up the praises of the whole creation. On that day, as is supposed, he delivered from Egypt the people whom he chose to preserve religion and its hopes, and to prepare the world for a Saviour; he then renewed its appointment with circumstances of strict rest, relative to their peculiar situation. At the solemn publication of the law, the general institution, as at first, was confirmed. At the appointment of the Sabbatical year, the building of the Tabernacle, the enumeration of the feasts, and on several other occasions, this command was repeated with peculiar solemnity.

Now, agreeably to that wonderful symbolical harmony which runs through scripture, the first Adam, the Patriarchal promises, the deliverance of Israel, the building of the Tabernacle, the Sabbatical year, the feasts, and indeed the whole law, have ever been held as representative of the second Adam, and our new life through him. In like manner, the promulgation of the law from Sinai prefigured
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that of the gospel from Sion on the day of Pentecost, on which, like the light of Heaven, it shone through the world ; and this day received a further sanctification from being that on which the Lord of the Sabbath rose from the dead. It has accordingly ever since been observed as the Christian Sabbath, freed from the severe strictness of the former, and prohibiting only what opposes its moral ends, public worship and instruction. It is one of the positive institutions of our religion. As Baptism is the memorial of our Saviour's entrance on his ministry for the salvation of the world ; as the Lord's Supper is that of his death, by which he finished our redemption ; so the Lord's Day is the sacred, the public, the returning memorial of his resurrection from the dead, by which he remedied the injuries of the fall, ennobled our creation, and crowned our nature with immortality.

As God then appointed times, so he did places of worship ; as he ordained his Sabbaths to be kept, so he enjoined his Sanctuary to be revered, Abel offered sacrifices, the

Patriarchs

Patriarchs raised altars and pillars, and planted trees and groves. These, in the infancy of the arts, God graciously accepted as sanctuaries or temples. Much treasure was expended on the Ark and the Tabernacle, before the worshippers themselves had any settled habitation. Oratories and synagogues were built, and the magnificent temple of Jerusalem, with its form and furniture, ministers and services, and every minute circumstance relating to it, were all expressly the appointment of God.

Our Saviour and his disciples paid every respect to the temple service, while that service was to be continued; and though there is no proof of houses or parts of houses being set apart for divine worship amidst the poverty and persecutions of the first christians, yet in private they regularly met, and spent the first day of the week in breaking the sacramental bread and in prayer. From the time the civil powers became friendly, churches began to be built, and, in all establishments, magnificent structures have been reared, which

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in decoration and splendour have kept pace with the progress of the arts*.

Not only through the whole Jewish, but through all history, we find public spirit and public prosperity accompanying, with wonderful exactness, the public worship of God ; and throughout scripture the reverence of the Sabbath and Sanctuary

* The first appropriated places of worship were altars made of rough stone or earth, usually on high places, on which the worshippers offered sacrifices, before which they called on the name of the Lord, and to which they added the shelter and solemn shade of trees and groves. Hence trees, groves, and mountains became generally sacred ; and hence the grove or avenue shape of what are called the later Gothic Cathedrals. Jacob set up a pillar, on the top of which he poured oil and a drink offering, from which Bethel, as he called it, are derived the ancient Baituli, and practice of erecting pillars of stone or wood, before the use of statues, and of anointing them with oil. Pillars and images became synonymous, from images being carved or placed on their top. Some, as Laban's, were portable, and kept in cases called tabernacles, or if large, temples. Aaron's Golden Calf seems to have been placed on a pillar, with an altar before it. Altars and images were enclosed with a rail, such as God ordered round Sinai on delivering the law. In process of time, a higher wall was built on the outside

tuary is enjoined under severe penalties, and with the most precious promises of Heaven. "This is the day which God hath chosen, and this the place where he records his name, and reveals himself most graciously to men."

Public worship rests not solely on the footing of a positive law. It is recommended to us by the general consent

outside of the rail, having seats within, under a portico, with a subdiale or gallery above, as in the house of Dagon at Gaza, which Sampson overthrew, and at Ashdod, in which was the ark of God.

Hesiod makes no mention of temples. Homer describes some magnificent ones, but whether roofed or open, does not appear. Virgil describes Priam's Chapel thus :

"Ædibus in mediis nudaque sub ætheris axe,

"Ingens ara fuit, juxtaque veterrima laurus

"Incumbens aræ, atque umbra complexa penates."

The ancient notion was, that the Gods were not to be confined, "quibus omnia deberent esse patentia ac libera, quorum hic mundus omnis templum esset ac domus." So the Persians and other nations had either no temples, or they were open above, that they might see the heavenly bodies, the objects of their worship. When they began to be roofed, a
round

consent of mankind, our own sense of decency, and the established rules of society, as a merciful appointment of rest and thought amidst the labours and dissipations of life, as a public testimony of reverence due to the Almighty, as an evidence of our faith to our fellow worshippers, and as a connecting principle of our common relations, necessities and blessings.

round opening was left in the middle, as in the Pantheon and the Temple of Terminus at Rome, of which Ovid says,

“ Nunc quoque se supra ne quod nisi fidera cernat,

“ Exiguum templi tecta foramen habent.”

At length temples became quite roofed, and the porticos, which used to be within, were built without. The temple of Jerusalem was perhaps the first that was entirely roofed: such was its extent and magnificence, that it occupied 153,000 workmen for several years, and it may have contributed to the improved architecture of Greece and Rome.

The first places of Christian worship were sepulchres, caves and private houses. Constantine founded several magnificent churches, as that of St Saviour's at Rome, and that of St Sophia at Constantinople, which Justinian, at its consecration, compared to that of Solomon's.

In this island, the inhabitants, who before the Roman invasion lived in thickets, dens, and caves, became, till the middle of the 4th century, more
and

bleffings. The principle of piety, like our other affections, acts in fociety with peculiar force, and is greatly firengthened by fymphony. What we feel together, we feel with double force. Each is affected by that fum of devout expreffion to which each contributes, but which no one fingly can fupply. The flame fpreads from breast to breast : A divine enthufiafm is caught : The facred ftillnefs of the day, with all the affairs of

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and more civilized. Architecture, and the arts connected with it, flourished ; and every Roman colony and free city, of which there was a great number, was a little Rome : but the devaftations of the Scots, Picts, and Saxons, that enfued, destroyed every veltige of art and civilization, and lodged them again in the miferable habitations of their favage anceftors. There was hardly a ftone church in the ifland, till about the beginning of the 8th century, when Wilfrid and Bifcop, two Englifh bifhops, introduced from Italy the art of building with ftone, and the ufe of glafs ; but it was not till the beginning of the 12th century, that an improved fabric of churches became general in Britain ; for near a century after, the ordinary houfes, even in London, and other capitals of Europe, were only of wood, and thatched ; and it was in the 15th and 16th centuries, that, with learning of all kinds, the chafte architecture of Greece and Rome revived.

this world at a stand ; the solemnities of public homage, with decorations suited to our feelings and to the place ; the living voice of the people, the animating swell of sacred music, the prostrations of deep humility, the exulting expressions of pious joy, all that is affecting in the warmth of zeal, or delightful in the beauty of holiness, conspire to touch, to raise, to subdue the heart, to form a taste, and to confirm a habit of devotion. The sight of a worshipping assembly, engaged, notwithstanding their difference of condition, in addressing the same common Father, imploring the same mercies, and acknowledging the same blessings, represents to us all men as equal, or rather as nothing in the sight of God, as equally dependent on him, as exposed to the same infirmities, wants and sorrows, yet as partakers of the same blessings, candidates for the same happiness, and heirs of the same hopes : A view of our connection with God and our fellow creatures, which must tend greatly to improve our humility, benevolence, and mutual forbearance:

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To aid and enforce our natural sentiments of moral duties, our Sabbaths and our Sacraments are subservient; and, as suited to our embodied state, as expressive of a temper of subjection and obedience to the will of God, the only steady principle of virtue, as commanded and complied with by the Author and Finisher of our faith, they are parts of one whole, of which none are to be neglected, and aids which we all need as fallible, probationary, and immortal beings. To observe them, therefore, is not weakness, is not superstition, is not preferring rites to morality; but declaring, that obedience to the appointments of God is an indispensable duty, and that a neglect of them is a thoughtless or determined disavowal of revelation.

Since, then, it is so reasonable a service, since there are so many and so great advantages resulting from such a worship, a regard to it is both our interest and duty; and when our conduct in general corresponds with our devotions offered

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up in the spirit of sincere humility and benevolence, in that blessed name, besides which there is none other given under heaven among men by which we can be heard or saved; when we pour out the free libations of our hearts as well as lips, and pay our Maker the daily tribute of our obedience, then it is we burn the purest incense, and make the most grateful offering to heaven.

It is not, however, to devotion alone, that the Sabbath and Sanctuary are dedicated, but likewise to religious and moral instruction. That sacred book, the code of our faith, the charter of our hopes, and the rule of our life, the holy scripture, which we profess to believe, and which here we read, explain and enforce, affords every aid and encouragement to devotion and obedience, applies to the feelings, and supplies the wants of the human heart, the want of knowledge of a Deity and duty, the want of a revelation and a Saviour; wants which the most enlightened of the heathens often deplored.

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teaches us, that the power of that eternal Being who made the world still upholds it; that the wisdom which planned, still directs it; and that the goodness which prompted still provides for the happiness of all its creatures. It details the history of our origin and fall, and of the great events and characters of antiquity, illustrating the ways of a progressive and benevolent providence. It enforces our religious, relative, and personal duties by laws written from the mouth of God; and it aids us in the path of perfection by history, allegory, the beauties of poetry, and the maxims of wisdom. The promises, the prophecies, the rites and sacrifices have their only meaning and completion in that divine Person, the glory of the Father, in whom dwelt bodily the fulness of the Godhead, and in whom all the rays of revelation, with so much confidence and splendour, unite. To show virtue in a living form, and man in the express image of his Maker; to unite the glory of the Son of God with the grace of the Son of man; to demonstrate the Almighty's abhorrence of sin; to exhibit a model of perfection, and at the same time

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to announce the acceptance of sincerity in its stead ; to save us from sin and death, Jesus Christ assumed our nature, suffered, and died. In proof of his mission, he wrought miracles of power, wisdom and goodness, fulfilled prophecy, and foretold future events. To confirm the wavering hope of immortality, he rose from the dead, and, possessed of universal dominion, ascended into heaven, to send the Comforter to his church, which, as he prophesied, grew, and spread, and filled the world with its branches, diffusing around them the spirit of humanity ; and at last he will return to judge the world in righteousness.

Thus far Christians in all ages are agreed ; and though God, the habitation of whose throne is clouds and darkness, has necessarily shadowed with obscurities some parts of his word, as of his works, yet through them he has not left us to grope for our duty, all the great lines of which are clear and distinct ; and even the mysteries inseparable from our faith all tend to our sanctification. The doctrine of three persons in
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the Godhead, representing all that is in God, as interested in our favour, raises our zeal to the highest pitch; the word manifested in the flesh, and the Son of God expiring on the Cross, excite our abhorrence of sin, from the idea of what he suffered on account of it, and explain the mysterious use of sacrifices: Grace operating on the soul, and giving help in time of need, animates and enables us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.

The religion of the Gospel is a simple rule of life, suited to the real state of human nature, to the capacity, the genius, the condition and necessities of all mankind. It teaches us, that the universe is one great system, with God at its head; that as children of the same Father, as members of one great family, and related to all things in it, we should be pleased with whatever tends to the general good; and in the duty which we owe to the great system, and its Author, are comprehended all other duties arising from the relations of human life, the duties of the tender husband, the faithful wife; the good parent, the dutiful child; the kind master, the diligent

gent servant; the generous prince, the loyal subject; the affectionate friend, the friendly neighbour; the just dealer, the candid, the forgiving, the benevolent man. In this system the parts assigned us are all honourable, and by keeping to them, and acting them well, we become the friends of nature, co-operate with providence, and can only thus be happy. Blessed with such a religion, we cannot be too thankful that we live in a land where, though not of the establishment, in which there are many ornaments, as of science, so of piety and virtue, we can worship God as our consciences, our habits, our situation may direct.

Our own form of worship is justly endeared to us by many considerations; but while we prefer it, and study to maintain pure that faith which we believe to have been delivered to the Saints, if we consider the general weakness and various ranks of the human intellect, the diversity of temperaments and tastes, the effects of different impressions, associations and habits through life, we shall be more disposed to regulate the influence of these on ourselves, and to imitate the comprehensive

prehensive knowledge and merciful impartiality of our heavenly Father, than to pronounce on the opinions or practice of others †.

It pleased God to prescribe a form to the Jewish church ;
our Saviour taught one to his disciples ; and in all ages, it

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† Some consider Episcopacy as a system of subordination, originating, like civil institutions, from the circumstances of the times, as from the form of the municipal and provincial magistracy of the Roman Empire ; as not inconsistent with any form of civil government, having existed under all, and for the three first centuries independently of any, yet, as best suited to monarchy, as an encouragement to learning and piety, as giving respect to the clergy as a body, as contributing to national order and decorum, and in no respect inconsistent with scripture. Others, considering that no society can subsist without government, that the principle of subordination is as natural and necessary a branch of our constitution as the social principle itself, and therefore of divine original ; that with regard to civil government, though its form is indefinite, yet when established, it cannot be resisted without a resistless necessity, maintain, that, as revelation is a positive institution, religious government must have a definite form, determinate ordinances, and be administered

has been a very universal usage, not only on account of a desirable uniformity, but as an useful aid to the devotions of the people; so that a form of worship is not repugnant to the word of God, no impediment to devotion, no stinting of the spirit,

ministered only by persons of a specific designation: That the priesthood, ever representative of our great high priest, was, during the patriarchal œconomy, in the first born: That under the law, Aaron and his sons were, by the express command of God to Moses, consecrated, and the Levites set apart for the ministrations of the temple, the penalty of invading their office being death: That as the law continued in force, even after our Saviour's resurrection, precepts on the government of his church might be last given, only to the apostles, and perhaps with injunctions of secrecy, that his religion, which was to be propagated without violence, might succeed to the Jewish, with as little offence and variation, as the typical nature of the one, and the corresponding nature of the other, would admit: That, as St Jerom and other fathers observe, "what Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the temple, such are Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons in the Christian church,"—these orders having been settled and in train before the New Testament was published, did not require to be minutely described, but rest on evidence as strong as that for the observance of the Christian Sabbath: That even our Saviour glorified not himself till solemnly

spirit, no instance of superstition. Our daily service leads us to contemplate ourselves as weak, dependent and guilty creatures : it directs us to the only means of repairing the ruins of our nature, and restoring it to its original honours. It engages

lemnly authorised by the descent of the holy spirit, and by a voice from heaven : That only to the apostles and the seventy of all his disciples, he gave authority to minister, which to the latter was only temporary and personal, but to the former, was at his ascension solemnly renewed, extending to the whole world, and to the end of time, empowering them alone to send others as his Father had sent him : That notwithstanding the promiscuous use of the sacerdotal titles in the New Testament, as Aaron and his subordinate sons are indiscriminately styled priests in the old, the names became distinct, as the offices always were : That according to the fathers, the apostles were succeeded in the powers of confirmation, ordination, and jurisdiction, by the bishops, who, perhaps out of humility, changed the title, and who derived their mission from the twelve, from Timothy, Titus, Sylvanus, Epaphroditus, called apostles or angels of the churches : That as their superiority is universally acknowledged to have been fully established, at the latest, about 35 years after the death of St John, *A. D.* 135, and as there was no Christian Sovereign till Constantine, *A. D.* 313, nor general council before that of Nice, *A. D.* 325, when could the superiority have been introduced? How could such a change

engages us, at stated periods, in a diversified succession of solemn and delightful exercises, which at once interest and improve. Its language, chiefly taken from scripture, is beautifully simple, and the sentiments which it conveys devotional and sublime.

change have taken place so suddenly, and so universally, yet so quietly and secretly, that no vestige of it can be traced? That no other form of church government was known for upwards of fourteen centuries, when Calvin declared for the equality, Luther and his followers in general retaining the orders: That regular lists of the names of the successive bishops have been preserved in some churches from the time they were founded by the apostles: That the chief, if not the only, authority quoted as implying an original equality of the three orders, are some passages from St Jerom, which, taken in connection, mean the powers of Bishop and Presbyter, equal only in absolution and consecration, not in ordination, confirmation, and jurisdiction; and which, as otherwise inconsistent with the passage mentioned above, and others of the same father, would only tend to invalidate his authority.

Episcopacy in Scotland has had different fates. The violent ferment of the Reformation did not properly subside there for fifty years, when, in 1610, Episcopacy was derived from England, and established by law. In 1636, a Scottish liturgy was authorised by King Charles I. but violently opposed; and after the civil and religious tumults which immediately followed and overturned both church and state, the failure in the episcopal line was supplied by the surviving bishops

lime, The mode of worship is equally removed from the refinement of a vain philosophy, and from that glare of pomp which is apt to lead to superstition. To gain and to fix the attention, the mind is presented, throughout the service, with.

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bishops in England, when in 1661 episcopacy without any liturgy was again established. Our church did not comply with the revolution 1688, but was tolerated in 1712, and has continued an undisputed episcopal succession, has subsisted without the countenance of the state, or any connection with the Church of England, and retains the government, the principles, and since 1707, the liturgy of that her mother church. In the communion service, indeed, her clergy are at liberty to use it, or one similar to that introduced into Scotland by King Charles I. and to that of the first liturgy of Edward VI. which is approved by Parliament as a godly order, even in the act that, with a prudent view to unity, authorized the second. The chief difference is that of simply blessing the elements, in addition to the words of institution; the mixture is not mentioned, and the commemoration of the faithful is not more explicit than in the present English service, by which the most scrupulous among us occasionally communicate and administer, nor do they differ more from their brethren in their ideas of the Eucharist, than Bishops Warburton and Hoadly, and other eminent divines of the Church of England, differ from one another. The bishops had no particular districts from 1720 till 1731, and ever since, the clergy,

a variety of important objects, and both minister and people bear a part in those devotions, which tend to promote the improvement of all. In a word, so skillfully conducted is our excellent liturgy, that all the powers of the mind are exercised

clergy, in electing their bishop, require only the mandate and sanction of the bishops. At no period indeed since the revolution were political principles made a term of communion, a subject of examination for orders or of instruction, so far as I know, more than in general that of submission to regular government. Both clergy and laity of the church of England were received at our altars, men attached to government were admitted into orders, and men in orders among us eminent for abilities and worth, had no objection to comply with government, but that of deviating from their brethren in general in the prayers for the state.

In 1719, 1746, and 1748, penal laws were enacted against the clergy and members of our church for non-compliance. As these laws affected people even of the lowest political importance, many were disposed to overlook the necessity of episcopal government, and to solicit clergymen of English or Irish ordination to settle in Scotland, where, were it only from our increasing intercourse with England, episcopal worship must have a place, and there is no doubt, that these clergymen have kept an attachment to that worship alive among many in whom it had every chance to have been long ago extinguished.

On

exercised and ennobled, the understanding enlightened, our devotions teaching and reminding us both of doctrine and duty; the will is induced to chuse, and the affections to love what is good; and thus by the divine blessing mingling imperceptibly with our own endeavours, if we are not wanting to ourselves, wanting in the Sabbath and Sanctuary, such habits of virtue may be formed and cherished, as may enable us to discharge aright the duties of life, and which may tend to prepare us, when the present scene of things shall pass away, when the earthly house of our tabernacle, and the
fabric

On the death of the last hope of the Royal Family of Stuart, our church felt herself at liberty to acknowledge in a public declaration, and in her prayers, the present government; and though the penal laws, which are only against non-conformists to the state, seem, on our compliance, virtually to have ceased, yet to satisfy people's minds, they require a formal repeal, the object of which would be merely to put us on a footing with other sects, can give to our ecclesiastical superiors no political character, nor even any spiritual connection, but with those who chuse to acknowledge them, and would tend to produce a desirable and mutually advantageous union of the two kinds of episcopacy north of the Tweed.

fabric of the world itself shall be dissolved, for becoming inhabitants of that house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

May, then, this place be subservient to these valuable purposes. May its ministers, zealous for the eternal interests of their people, be clothed with righteousness, and ever remember that their embassy is that of peace. May their instructions contribute to make us think on our ways, to mend the temper, to improve the heart, to make us good in all the relations of life, and wise unto salvation. May the prayers offered up be mercifully heard in heaven. May its altar and sacraments tend to our sanctification. May its ornaments * have their

* The altar piece, painted by Mr Allan, is the Tribute-money and Virtues.

In the centre, our Saviour, the principal figure, with a suitable expression of dignified serenity, is standing with his arm raised, and pointing upwards

their use, in reminding us of our duties as creatures of God, disciples of Christ, and subjects of a regular and good government. May they excite us to aspire after the virtues of innocence, faith, hope, and charity. And may we all, from fearing and reverencing God in the assembly of the saints here, be, in his good time, translated to that world of glorified spirits, where we shall enjoy the Sabbath and the Sanctuary of eternal rest and felicity.

upwards, as if concluding the answer, " And to God the things that are God's." An old Pharisee appears to feel the full force of the words and look, is stooping, drawing in the piece of money, and raising one foot as if inclining to withdraw. A hardened Herodian seems to lose the sense of his own mortification in the enjoyment of the Pharisee's confusion; while another behind is retiring with marks of disappointment and anger. In the left extremity, a youth in a pensive posture, with the features of innocence, seems pondering on the contrast between our Saviour and the group. In the back ground, an aged Rabbi, with the law-roll in his hand, is sitting impatient for the result. In the distance, a man is pointing out our Saviour to another, with looks of pious admiration.

Round the picture, which is nine feet by six, are the virtues, Purity, Faith, Hope, and Charity.

THE END.

